

March 19, 2003

SENATE SIGNALS WILLINGNESS TO HOLD LINE ON SPENDING

WASHINGTON – The Senate today defeated the first in an expected series of amendments designed to reduce the jobs and growth package in favor of more government spending.

The Budget Resolution puts high priority on Education by providing the highest level of federal funding for Education in history, including a \$1 billion increase for Title I and a \$1 billion increase for special education, among other increases. An effort to provide additional, unsustainable 40-percent increases in Education spending was tabled.

Senator Judd Gregg, Budget Committee member and Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, pointed out that the Bush Administration has invested \$3.9 billion in increased funding for Title I in just three years, as compared to \$2.4 billion during the Clinton Administration's eight years.

Senator Gregg on Education and priorities, "It's very easy to come to the floor in a difficult fiscal time when we're facing a war, when there are a lot of pressures on us because of a deficit, and say, because you have no responsibility and don't produce budgets, that you are willing to increase the spending ad infinitum. During the period when we were running surpluses, the opportunity was there to increase spending without a great deal of choice in the area of priorities. Today it's a much tougher situation, and the choices on priorities have been made and President Bush is committed to that funding."

Chairman Don Nickles on efforts to increase spending, "I knew at the beginning of this process no matter what we put in, there would be amendments on the floor to increase education spending. Education spending under this President has gone up dramatically. No matter what we do, no matter how high we go, there will be amendments that say let's do more."